

That's why I was troubled to hear news reports about several of our most highly trained and skilled Air Force pilots experiencing loss of oxygen while in the cockpit of the F-22 aircraft. We're talking about blacking out, losing control of the plane, and suffering memory loss. In fact, 18 percent of those who flew the F-22 reported an incident similar to this. In fact, one family blames this mysterious affliction for a crash that killed their loved one.

We have some of our most fearless pilots afraid and even refusing to take the controls of the F-22. Two pilots went so far as to appear on shows like "60 Minutes" without permission from their superiors so that they could expose the problem.

In response, Madam Speaker, I prepared an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, which the House will debate today. My amendment would cut off funding for the F-22 until the Pentagon inspector general completes an investigation on these malfunctions and finds a solution to protect the safety of our pilots.

Thankfully, my amendment wasn't necessary because, yesterday, Secretary of Defense Panetta took steps to impose flight restrictions on the F-22, demanding that the Air Force take stronger safety measures to protect our troops. Because of the Secretary's response to these life-and-death concerns, I have withdrawn my amendment, but I will stay on top of the situation.

The F-22 isn't exactly a "bargain basement" item, Madam Speaker. Throughout the life of the program, it's cost taxpayers \$79 billion. And that's for a plane originally designed to fight the next generation of Soviet jet, even though the Soviet Union, itself, didn't have a next generation, and it doesn't even exist any longer. What's more, the F-22 hasn't flown a single mission in Iraq or Afghanistan.

It troubles me, Madam Speaker, that we've spent so much on slick, supposedly state-of-the-art aircraft that are making our Air Force pilots dangerously sick—at a moment when we could use that money on programs our servicemembers badly need. For example, veterans groups are fighting for more resources for mental health treatment, for job placement, for access to education, for VA home loans, and much more. Certainly we should invest in improving the lives of our troops instead of endangering them.

My Republican colleagues are fond of pointing out that we're in a challenging fiscal environment where every government expenditure should receive the strictest scrutiny. I just hope that they'll apply as tough a standard to expensive weapons systems as they do to foreign humanitarian aid and important domestic safety net programs right here at home.

As we debate the defense authorization today, we must choose the defense programs that actually enhance our national security over ones like the F-

22 that are creating more problems than solutions.

Madam Speaker, I believe more strongly than ever that we need to end the war in Afghanistan, supporting our troops by bringing them home; but, in the meantime, making sure that the planes they fly and the equipment they use are as safe as possible is certainly our number one responsibility. We owe them nothing less.

#### STOP MILITARY RAPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, today I rise again to speak about the horrific situation in the military, and that is the epidemic of rape and sexual assault that goes on unabated.

This is the 20th time that I am here on the floor to tell the story of yet another victim. Nineteen times before, I've been on this floor to tell about victims in military service. I've told you about the military culture that treats sexual harassment and assault with a silent acceptance and the command structure that punishes the victim and does not take care of dealing with the perpetrator.

Today I'm going to tell you about the culture that exists in our military service academies that train our cadets to become commissioned officers. I have not told you that the same conflicted chain-of-command structure that exists in the military also exists at our prestigious service academies. The military academy at West Point as well as the Naval, Coast Guard, Air Force, and Merchant Marine academies follow the same rule as the military, the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Today I am going to tell you the story of Karley Marquet, who was a first-year cadet when she was raped just last year. She was a brand-spanking-new West Pointer. Gifted in both academics and athletics, Karley was a star high school student. She had her pick to go to any number of colleges. She chose West Point because she wanted to serve her country. West Point chose Karley because she possessed the skills and character that the Army needs for success.

But only a few months at the academy, Karley was betrayed. She was raped by a West Point upperclassman that she knew and thought she could trust. He came to her room one night when she was alone to talk about girl troubles. He gave her a sports drink that had alcohol in it. Peer pressure by upperclassmen to consume alcohol is pervasive at West Point. Karley drank about one-quarter of the liquid in the bottle, and she became intoxicated. The upperclassman convinced her to go to his room, and he raped her. Later, the upperclassman repeatedly went to Karley's room to prevent her from reporting the rape. She also heard West Point upperclassmen talk about another female cadet who had reported

being raped. They called the victim a "slut" who "was asking for it."

But Karley was not intimidated. She reported the crime to her chain of command. But just like so many of the stories I have told here before, no serious action was taken to assist her. West Point did not move the perpetrator from Karley's company. She had to see him every day. West Point did not alter Karley's duties, which meant that she still had to do chores with the upperclassman who raped her.

As a result of the rape and the hostile environment, Karley began to suffer posttraumatic stress symptoms, becoming depressed and suicidal. Karley resigned from West Point less than a year after becoming a cadet.

It's been over a year since Karley was raped, yet the perpetrator has not been brought to justice. Why was nothing done to help this talented young woman who, only 12 months before, was deemed qualified and deserving of a spot at the prestigious United States Military Academy?

The violent act committed against Karley is reprehensible. The dismissive attitude held by academy officials is shocking and inexcusable. It is time for this narrative to change.

Last December, a Department of Defense report revealed a nearly 60 percent increase in reported sexual assaults at service academies in addition to the fact that West Point was found "not in compliance" with the Pentagon's policies to prevent rape and sexual assault.

Civilian colleges and university students can report crimes to local police officers. They can press charges directly against perpetrators, and they can obtain their own legal counsel. Military cadets must comply with the military justice system that has a horrible record of providing justice for victims of rape and sexual assault. Our future military leaders deserve better.

Survivors can email me at [stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov](mailto:stopmilitaryrape@mail.house.gov) if they would like to speak out as well.

□ 1110

#### THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE ENDING OF CIVIL WAR IN SRI LANKA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. It is my pleasure to rise today to note the third anniversary of the ending of the civil war in Sri Lanka. On May 19, 2009, a new era—an era of peace—began in this country; an era of hope, an era of possibility, and an era of justice with movement towards reconnection and reconciliation. Unfortunately, implementation of this new era of hope seems to be slow in coming, it seems to many Tamils in the country and throughout the diaspora who have lingering fears that governance of the country will remain closed and not as democratically